

# UNIT COMMANDERS LETTER GUIDE

## SCHOOL LETTER HEAD

Office Symbol

20 June 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR Unit Commanders of Students, \_\_\_\_\_ Course, Class \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT: Distance Learning Course Requirements

1. Reference HQDA, DCSOPS Policy Message, Subject: Implementation of The Army Distance Learning Program, dated 28 March 2001.

2. State the purpose of this letter and identify the soldier(s) to whom the letter applies.  
Example:

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that SSGT Harold Jones, 123-45-6789, of your Command has been selected to attend Class 115-01 of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA) Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer Course (BSNCOC). The BSNCOC will train SSGT Jones to serve as an integral member of the battle staff and qualify him to help manage the day-to-day operations of a battalion or brigade command post.

3. Provide an overview of the course structure and identify the locations where student(s) will receive DL instruction. Example:

a. The BSNCOC structure of phases, modules, lessons, and tests ensures standardization in accordance with The Army Training System (TATS). It trains all soldiers, regardless of component, on course critical tasks to the same task performance standard. The course has two phases. Phase I is an asynchronous distance learning training packet which SSGT Jones must complete within 60 days at his home station.

b. Upon completing Phase I, SSGT Jones will attend Phase II in residence at one of the following locations: the USASMA at Fort Bliss, Texas (four weeks and one day); Fort McCoy, Wisconsin (21 consecutive days); or at a Digital Training Facility (DTF) certified to receive the BSNCOC through synchronous video teletraining (VTT) (four weeks and four days). If SSGT Jones elects to receive training through VTT, he will be directed to the BSNCOC-certified DTF at or closest to his home station, which is \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Identify an individual who will be available to answer questions or provide additional information. Example:

If you have questions about the BSNCOC or class schedules, you may contact the BSNCOC Chief Instructor at Commercial (915) 568-9165, DSN 978-9165 or e-mail [battlestaff@emh10.bliss.army.mil](mailto:battlestaff@emh10.bliss.army.mil). Additional information is available at <http://usasma.bliss.army.mil/website/BSNCOC/geninfo.html>.

5. Describe the nature of the course, emphasizing the commitment that the soldier must make to successfully complete DL phases. Example:

a. As the only course offered by the U.S. Army to train noncommissioned officer battle staff members, the BSNCOB is a fast-paced, performance-oriented program of instruction. The course focuses on the major areas of Plans, Orders and Annexes, Military Intelligence, and Combat Service Support. All students present a military information briefing and take part in a Command Post Exercise (CPX) in which they apply the lessons they learn throughout the course.

b. The distance-learning phase begins on 18 July 2001 and ends on 15 September 2001. At the end of the phase, SSGT Jones will take a Phase I exam over the Internet. Successful completion of this phase requires SSGT Jones to make a firm commitment to accomplish the course work in the time allotted. He will be working at his own pace and must budget his time to assure successful completion of this phase. Reference 1 requires that students be exempted from other duties while attending DA-directed/quota-managed distance learning courses. For planning purposes, experience shows that students should allot a minimum of five hours per day during the workweek to accomplish required reading and written assignments.

c. Students who fail to complete any phase requirements within the prescribed timeframe, or who fail academically, will receive a DA Form 1059, Service School Academic Evaluation Report, stating that the student failed to achieve phase standards and the reasons for the failure. The student and the DA Form 1059 will be referred to the student's unit commander for further disposition.

7. Conclude the letter by soliciting the Commander's cooperation to assure a successful learning experience. Example:

The USASMA staff and faculty stand ready to provide any assistance necessary to achieve a successful outcome to the BSNCOB. We solicit your cooperation in encouraging SSGT Jones to meet this important commitment and ensuring that he has the necessary time to accomplish all course work.

SIGNED  
School Commandant